

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL

I. Definition: gospel (εὐαγγέλιον, euaggelion) is a compound noun meaning good (εὖ, eu) news (ἄγγέλιον, aggelion). It is used outside the New Testament (NT) for good news in contrast to bad news. It was used as a technical term for the news of victory (e.g., 1Sam.31:9) or as related to the emperor cult in which his birth and accession to the throne introduce a new and prosperous era. In the NT, gospel is used technically for the message of salvation; the best news mankind can receive. Lk 2:10 *“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.’”* It is also used for good news presented to the believer. Heb 3:2 *“For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.”*

II. The boundaries of the gospel, 1Cor.15:14; cp. Ac 16:30-31

- A. “Died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” (spiritual death)
- B. “Buried” (physical death).
- C. “Raised on the third day”.

III. Synonymous phrases.

- A. “Gospel of Christ”, Rom.1:16,17 (the focus of the gospel).
- B. “Gospel of God”, 1Th 2:2 (indicates source)
- C. “Glorious gospel”, 1Tim.1:11 (frees us from the Mosaic Law).
- D. “My gospel” or “our gospel”, 2Tim.2:8; 2Cor.4:3,4 (emphasizes the communicator's identification with his message).
- E. “Gospel of peace”, Eph.6:15 (the barrier is removed).
- F. “Gospel of grace”, Act.20:24 (God's provision of salvation is a gift).

IV. Observations on the presentation of the gospel.

- A. Communicators of the gospel.
  - 1. Evangelists (the apostles, Philip, Mark, Apollos), Eph.4:11.
  - 2. Pastor-Teachers (limited), 2Tim.4:5 *“do the work of an evangelist”*.
  - 3. All believers in personal witnessing.
- B. Evangelism is empowered by the Holy Spirit, 1Pet.1:12b. *“...these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven...”*
- C. Emphasis of the gospel, 1Cor.1:17 *“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should not be made void.”*
- D. The gospel communication does not emphasize the fact that we are sinners, rather that Christ died to remove sin from us. 1Co 15:3
- E. Mental attitude toward the gospel, Rom.1:16 *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”*
  - 1. For believers: not ashamed.
  - 2. For unbelievers: belief in Christ.

- F. Place of the gospel, Rom.15:20 *“And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named”* (proselytizing is not teaching the gospel).
  - G. The gospel is without charge, 2Cor.11:7 *“...I preached the gospel of God to you without charge.”*
  - H. Part of an accurate presentation of the gospel is that Christ’s work is all sufficient for the salvation of anyone who believes. Jn 6:28-29 *“They said therefore to Him, ‘What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’”*
- V. The gospel also belongs to the Old Testament crowd, Rm 4:1-7; Gal.3:8;
- VI. Salvation is acquired by faith, in a once-for-all act (eternal security). Ac 16:31 *“And they said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.’”*
- A. The Aorist Imperative of “believe” (πιστεύω – pisteuo) declares once it is done, the action (and therefore its result) is completed.
  - B. The Future Indicative of “saved” declares that if one believes, his salvation is guaranteed to occur, and at no point will it not be a reality.
  - C. If God saves us and makes us His children, how can He abandon us for any reason? Rm 8:38-39 *“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, (which includes us) shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”*
  - D. Just as all the glory for our salvation goes to God, all the glory for keeping us saved goes to Him. 1Jn 2:12 *“I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.”*
- VII. The believer is edified by the gospel, Eph.6:15, *“And having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE”*; Isa.52:7 *“How beautiful on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation.”* ; Php 1:27 *“Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;”*
- VIII. There is a false gospel, Gal.1:6-8 *“I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”*
- IX. The enemy of the gospel
- A. Satan and his emissaries work to prevent men from hearing the gospel. Lk 8:12 *“And those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they may not believe and be saved.”*
  - B. But no one perishes unless they would not have believed if they had heard. 2Cor.4:3,4 *“And if our gospel is obscured, it is obscured to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*

- C. Anyone who wishes to become a believer will be brought to salvation. Jn 6:37 *“All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out”*
- X. The news of God's provision of rest for the believer in time is good news, Heb.4:6 *“Since it remains for some to enter it (Phase 2 rest), and those who previously had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience.”*
- XI. It is a distortion of the gospel of grace to say it requires works in connection with faith, such as:
- A. public confession – Rm 10:9-10 *“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”* – but this would deny access to anyone who was unable to confess
  - B. water baptism – Ac 2:38 *“And Peter said to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* – but Ac 11:16 specifies which baptism is in view – *“And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”* and Paul denies that water baptism is a part of the gospel in 1Co 1:17. *“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel,”*
  - C. repentance (i.e. feeling sorry for your sins) Ac 3:19 *“Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away...”* – but this misunderstands the meaning of “repent” (μετανοέω – metanoëo) which means “to change one’s mind”, not “regret” (μεταμέλομαι – metamelomai) as in Mt 27:3 *“Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,”* , which verse also shows repentance does not have any place in salvation (Judas still went to hell)
  - D. it must include good works – Js 2:24 *“You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.”* but this denies the efficacy of Christ’s work on the cross. Jn 19:30 *“When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, **“It is finished!”** And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit.”*(emphasis mine)
- XII. The “good news” is that we no longer have to live up to legal demands to attain salvation, it has been provided for us apart from works of law. Gal 2:16 *“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified”*

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